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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Items 36, 37, 87 and 154 of the
provisional agenda*
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL
TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 12 September 1997 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I refer to the letter dated 4 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to you (A/52/321-S/1997/689). It is worth recalling that Israel is the only Member State designated as an occupying Power by the Security Council. Israel has systematically violated and ignored scores of resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations. The extent of Israel's violation of international legitimacy becomes apparent from the first line of the above-mentioned letter, which speaks of "Jerusalem" instead of West Jerusalem, indicating a rejection of the established position of the international community, which considers East Jerusalem to be an occupied territory.

In reference to terrorist acts, one must note that the record of the Israeli side is not clean, as many Israeli settlers continue to commit acts of terrorism against the Palestinian people. These settlers were illegally brought into the occupied Palestinian territory and armed by Israel, the occupying Power. Only a few days ago, The New York Times, on 6 September 1997, published

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

information on a special Israeli military unit known as "Flotilla 13", whose actions have included repeated violations of the sovereignty of Member States, as well as assassinations and kidnappings of Palestinian and other leaders, all of which can be described as terrorist activities.

With regard to the bombings that took place in West Jerusalem on 4 September 1997, the Palestinian Authority has unequivocally condemned these and other similar acts. There are, however, increasing indications that the Israeli Government of Prime Minister Netanyahu is using those terrible acts as an excuse to bury both the Declaration of Principles of 1993 and the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip of 1995. The Israeli Government, since its first day in office, has indicated clear hostility towards these binding agreements and has adopted official government guidelines that blatantly contradict the letter and spirit of those agreements. Furthermore, the policies and actions of the Israeli Government have dramatically increased the suffering of the Palestinian people. Israel has imposed severe and unprecedented measures, such as the simultaneous overall closure of the Palestinian territory and siege over Palestinian cities. These policies and actions are the real underlying causes for the growing despair, extremism and acts of violence in the region.

In spite of all of the above, the Palestinian side will continue to take all of its responsibilities seriously, including taking the necessary actions, in accordance with the law, against anyone who might be involved in any illegal activities. Indiscriminate and broad measures against any segment of the Palestinian population, because of political beliefs, cannot and will not take place.

The road to the establishment of a comprehensive peace is clear. The parties must reaffirm their commitment to the basis of the Middle East peace process, including the principle of land for peace, their commitment to the implementation of the agreements reached, and their commitment to mutual recognition and mutual respect.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 36, 37, 87 and 154 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations